

In September of 1988, then-Captain Celeste transferred to the Marine Corps Reserves. In January of the following year, he joined 3rd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company where he deployed and participated in numerous bi-lateral exercises in Korea and Japan. During the first Gulf War, Captain Celeste was a commander in charge of training more than 200 Marines for deployment to the Middle East and received an award for his meritorious service. In January of 1992, Captain Celeste transferred to Hotel Battery (155 mm Howitzers), 3rd Battalion, 14th Marines where he acted as Platoon Commander and Forward Observer. In June of that same year, he was selected to be the Executive Officer of Delta Company, 4th Light Armored Infantry Company. In 1993, he became the Commanding Officer of Delta Company and served in that capacity for over two years. Concurrent to his assignment as Delta Company's Commanding officer, Captain Celeste served as the Headquarters Marine Corps counterdrug officer where he monitored Marine Corps counterdrug operations.

In 1995, then-Major Celeste was assigned as the Officer-in-Charge of the Department of the Navy Gulf War Declassification Project where he was responsible for the declassification of tens of thousands of pages of Gulf War I operational records. He subsequently received an award for meeting the mandated declassification deadline as established by the Deputy Secretary of Defense. Due to his expertise in the area, in May of 1997, Major Celeste was assigned as an investigator to the Office of the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses. At this assignment, he assisted in the investigation of the causal factors for Gulf War Illnesses using the documents that he and his team helped to previously declassify. In order to widely disseminate the findings of the investigation, they were published on the World Wide Web which, at the time, was a novel medium for this purpose.

In August of 1999, then-Lieutenant Colonel Celeste was assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps (Office of Legislative Affairs) where he served as a Congressional Affairs Officer. In this capacity, he assisted in the answering of high level congressional inquiries, led the Marine Corps Congressional Fellowship Program, and assisted in the organizing of congressional outreach programs to include the following: The Congressional Marines Group, The Capitol Hill Running Club, Congressional Marine Day, and programs for Veterans Service Organizations and Defense Industry representatives.

Colonel Celeste served in Iraq from February to August of 2007 as the Marine liaison between the Commanding General, Multi-National Forces West and the Commanding General Civilian Police Assistance Training Team. During this period, Colonel Celeste was a member of the Green Zone Council, which supports the Boys and Girls Scouting programs in Iraq. He was also involved in supporting a local orphanage in Baghdad by coordinating and soliciting donations from family and friends.

For more than 26 years, Colonel Celeste's great sense of duty and exceptional work ethic have benefitted his fellow Marines and his nation. We thank him for his steadfast dedication and wish him fair winds and following seas as he starts the next chapter of his life.

TRIBUTE TO THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES FOR A PRESIDENTIAL ORDER ON PRISONER TREATMENT, TORTURE, AND CRUELTY

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner Treatment, Torture and Cruelty which is supported by a number of organizations and individuals, including the Council of Churches of Santa Clara County, California, in my Congressional District. I believe these principles will protect our country and the U.S. servicemen abroad by banning the use of cruel and inhumane interrogation methods.

I fully support the core goals of this Declaration of Principles which include implementing a national standard for all U.S. personnel and agencies for the interrogation and treatment of prisoners and banning the use of any methods of interrogation that we would not find acceptable if used against Americans. Many of these issues were addressed in a bill I introduced this year to ban waterboarding as an interrogation technique.

Waterboarding is torture and is recognized as such by the Geneva Convention. Its continued use by representatives of our nation contradicts what so many of our soldiers are fighting for overseas. The United States of America has long accepted that water torture is beneath the standards of a civil nation. In 1947, the United States prosecuted a Japanese military officer for carrying out a form of water torture on a U.S. civilian during the Second World War, securing a conviction and a sentence of 15 years of hard labor. The military has frequently prosecuted American military personnel for subjecting prisoners to water torture, including sentencing a U.S. Army major to 10 years of hard labor for subjecting an insurgent to water torture in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War.

Our nation was able to win two world wars and defeat a rising tide of communism with this prohibition in place. I'm confident we can defeat our current enemies without undermining our moral dignity.

As we move forward with a new Congress and a new Administration, we have the opportunity to change course and restore the rule of law. The Bush Administration has relied heavily on illegal and inhumane interrogation techniques, and by doing so has damaged our country's reputation in the process. We can restore the moral standards that guided us successfully for so many generations and the Declaration of Principles provides a framework for the United States to do just that. Congress and the Obama Administration must work to ensure that torture has no place in the battle against terrorism.

HONORING GRANT GATES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the outstanding achieve-

ment of Grant Gates of Kansas City, Missouri. Grant has earned a perfect 36 ACT composite score. Grant is one of only three students from the state of Missouri and one of only fifty-two in the country to earn the perfect score.

Madam Speaker, Grant has dedicated himself to his studies and extracurricular activities. As a junior at North Kansas City High School, Grant has participated in the Missouri Scholars Academy at the University of Missouri, the Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee, member of the high school swim team, member of the choir and Harmonaires show choir, and is a part of the school's state championship Scholar Bowl. Grant is currently working toward an International Baccalaureate diploma, Gold Medallion Honors diploma, and A+ Schools eligibility. Grant is also active in Boy Scout Troop 9 in North Kansas City.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me, Gary and Elinor Gates, the North Kansas City Schools, and North Kansas City High School in applauding Grant Gates' outstanding achievement. We wish Grant many more years of success.

IN RECOGNITION OF EUGENE PERRIN ELEBASH, JR.

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eugene Elebash, Jr., a veritable northwest Florida community leader who passed away on November 24, 2008. Mr. Elebash spent his entire life serving others, and I am proud to honor his life of dedication and service.

Mr. Elebash was born in Pensacola, FL, in May of 1920 and made his home there. He graduated from Pensacola High School in 1938 and from the University of Florida in 1942. Upon graduating college, Mr. Elebash immediately joined the United States Army Air Forces where he served honorably until the end of World War II, achieving the rank of major. He then returned to Pensacola to take over the family business and remained ever since. Mr. Elebash married his high school sweetheart, Jane, his wife of 66 years.

After returning to Pensacola, Mr. Elebash began a life of dedicated service to the community. Over the years, he was active in innumerable organizations including the Saint Christopher's Episcopal Church, the City Civil Service Board, the YMCA, and the West Florida Children's Home Society. He was a member of the Downtown Rotary Board for 61 years. Mr. Elebash was elected to three terms as a Pensacola city councilman and served as the mayor of Pensacola from 1971 and 1973. His family continues to play an active role in the community.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, I am privileged to honor Mr. Eugene Elebash, Jr. for his life of public service to his country and to northwest Florida. Mr. Elebash will be remembered by all as a loving husband and father, as well as a genuine community leader and a true friend.